

much better place to live than she found it. She will be missed by those who knew her, but her example of commitment and concern will remain a part of her legacy.

AMERICAN OVERSEAS INTERESTS
ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 8, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1561), to consolidate the foreign affairs agencies of the United States; to authorize appropriations for the Department of State and related agencies for fiscal years 1996 and 1997; to responsibly reduce the authorizations of appropriations for United States foreign assistance programs for fiscal years 1996 and 1997, and for other purposes:

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Chairman, I want to express my strongest opposition to the amendment proposed by my distinguished friend from New Jersey [Mr. SMITH]. I have the highest regard for my colleague, Mr. SMITH. He and I have worked together on many issues on human rights, and I fully share his abhorrence of coerced abortions that have been carried out in China. I have joined him on many occasions to protest in the strongest terms this egregious violation of human rights. While we have worked closely together on a large number of human rights issues, including coercive population control programs, and I look forward to working with him on a number of other issues in the future, I disagree in the strongest terms with this amendment that he has offered to the bill H.R. 1561.

I support the reasoned alternative that has been presented by our distinguished colleague from Maryland, Mrs. MORELLA, which is the same provision that Mrs. MEYERS of Kansas presented during full committee markup, and which was approved by a significant margin during that markup by the entire International Relations Committee.

Mr. Chairman, unchecked population growth in developing countries poses a serious and a growing threat to United States national interests throughout the world. It has serious implications for our international policy in areas of trade, security, environment and international migration.

To reduce the whole range of U.S. population assistance to the issue of abortion—which is what the amendment of our colleague from New Jersey does—does a great injustice to our pioneering work in the field of population planning, where the United States is a recognized leader and innovator.

U.S. population assistance addresses a broad range of critical needs—maternal health; child survival; primary health care, including the prevention of death due to pregnancy-related causes; and the prevention of the spread of sexually transmitted diseases; and contraception.

The aim of a family planning organization is not to promote abortion, but quite to the contrary—to prevent unwanted pregnancies and abortion, which is the leading cause of maternal mortality. The principal objectives of the Agency for International Development's Popu-

lation Program are to enable couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children, to improve individual health, and to reduce population growth rates to levels that are consistent with sustainable development.

U.S. population assistance is very much in our Nation's interest and—dollar for dollar—probably offers the best return on investment of any of our foreign assistance programs.

If effective action is not taken with this decade as today's 1.6 billion children in the developing world under the age of 15 reach their childbearing years, then the Earth's population could nearly quadruple to over 19 billion people by the end of the next century.

Such an unchecked explosion in population threatens the international community just as much as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or the increase in international crime, because the alarming rate of population growth underlies virtually every developmental, environmental, and national security problem facing the world today. In Algeria, Brazil, and India—to name but a few examples—we are seeing how growing populations hinder economic development, foster serious environmental degradation, and exacerbate political instability.

Experts estimate, Mr. Chairman, that 125 million people in developing countries want to delay or avoid childbirth, but they are not using contraception because they do not have access to means of birth control.

Population growth is outstripping the capacity of many nations to make even modest gains in economic development, leading to growing political instability in many countries. At best, this undermines the ability of these countries to be reliable members of the international community or good trading partners of the United States. At worst, it can contribute to massive unrest and violence, as we have witnessed in Rwanda.

The impact of exponential population growth is also evident in the mounting signs of depletion and overuse of the world's natural resources. We have only to see what is happening throughout the continent of Africa, in South Asia, and in many areas of South America to realize the serious and, I fear, irreversible environmental consequences of unchecked population growth.

At the International Conference on Population in 1984 in Mexico City, the Officials of the Reagan administration speaking for the United States Government announced a new policy of denying United States foreign aid funds to any foreign nongovernmental organization that provided abortion counseling, referral, or services. Initially called the Mexico City Policy, because it was announced at the U.N. conference in that city, it came to be known as the International Gag Rule.

While the ostensible purpose of that policy was to prevent abortion, the evidence has shown that restrictions did nothing to reduce reliance on abortion. In fact, the only impact of the restrictions was to interfere with the delivery of effective family planning services and appropriate medical care.

Current law and the explicit text of the Morella/Meyers language make it very clear that no United States funds can be used now or in the future to perform abortions abroad except in cases of rape, incest, or endangerment of the mother's life. No United States funds may be used to lobby for or

against abortion, and no United States funds will be spent by the U.N. Family Planning Agency in China.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to reject this effort to return us to the era of the International Gag Rule. The counter-productive and self-defeating Mexico City Policy was appropriately and rightfully rejected by the American people, and it was repudiated in the past by the Congress as well. It is necessary for us to reject this effort to turn back the clock. The Smith amendment is contrary to American national interests, and it is a policy that is contrary to the interest of stability and economic development in the Third World. It is time for us to move forward and face realistically and meaningfully the very serious population problems that we face in the world.

PROTECTING THE FLAG

HON. TOBY ROTH

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 14, 1995

Mr. ROTH. Mr. Speaker, today Americans across the Nation will unfurl Old Glory to celebrate Flag Day. Last Saturday, June 10, Appleton, WI held the Nation's largest Flag Day parade to honor our veterans who won World War II 50 years ago.

Fifty years ago, the U.S. Marine Corps invaded the rocky island of Iwo Jima. The month-long assault marked the beginning of the United States forces freeing the South Pacific from Japanese occupation. This epic battle was won at the staggering cost of 6,821 American lives.

One of the veterans of this battle was John H. Bradley, a native of Antigo, WI. When he died last year, Mr. Bradley was the last survivor of the six American servicemen who raised the U.S. flag on Iwo Jima. Their valor was captured in the unforgettable 1945 Pulitzer Prize-winning photograph by Joe Rosenthal.

Across the Potomac River from the Capitol, that flag-raising scene is brought to life in the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial. Day and night, American citizens and visitors from around the world come to pay homage to the six Americans who struggled to raise the flag on Mount Suribachi, the highest point on Iwo Jima.

The raising of the flag brought tears to the valiant Americans who were still struggling to vanquish the nearly impregnable Japanese defenses. The rippling red, white, and blue of Old Glory overhead instilled hope and courage to these weary marines.

To Americans, the flag is a symbol to revere, respect, and honor. At the 45th annual Appleton Flag Day parade, I saw rugged World War II veterans, as well as little boys and girls, snap to attention when the flag passed by.

For many years, Federal law and 48 State laws protected the flag from physical desecration. While Americans have always defended political dissent, we draw the line at burning our national symbol.

But in 1989, the U.S. Supreme Court nullified these laws with a nonsensical interpretation of the first amendment protection of freedom of speech.